

Possession.

7 There was jubilation in our little family when the tenants moved away on the afternoon of December 31 and we were free to take possession of the "new" house, which was a pine box house with one large room and a lean-to kitchenⁿ and a porch in front. This house seemed like an elegant mansion in comparison with the log cabin we had left. We were busy for several days in getting settled in our new quarters and hauling in a supply of wood.

The team consisted of George, a sorrel horse, and Jennie, an old, rather thin bay mare. George was inclined to be deliberate in his movements, but Jenny was ambitious. Father said they were well matched because Jennie wanted to pull all the load and George was quite willing that she should. We had a cow and a calf, a pony, Jenny's colt Duke and Gypsy's colt Daisy; also some chickens, a cat, and Carlo, Skippy's puppy. Carlo resembled Skippy but was black with a white collar. He was very affectionate and active, aggressive, and a good watch dog, but would not mind. When strangers came he would bark until exhausted. Also he fought every male dog he encountered, regardless of size. He would attack with such fury and impetuosity that most dogs would give way, which filled me with delight and unholy pride; but once in a while he would attack the wrong dog and be shaken like a rat and badly chewed up, which would fill me with despair.

Going after the Cows.

7 The first week in January after we moved into the new house was mild, bright, warm, and springlike. Father decided that it was a good time to go for the two cows he had taken in exchange for the sewing machine and that had returned to their former owner the previous year. The distance was about 28 miles. We

We started early in the morning, father riding George and I Jennie. Before reaching Paris we turned south across the prairie and struck the right road at the timber line and reached the log cabin of the former owner about the middle of the afternoon. It was a two-room cabin and the family was a large one. We were made welcome. In the two summers the two cows and my heifer had been away from us they had increased so that now we had four cows, three 2-year olds and 3 yearlings. They were rounded up in the cowlot before dark so we could make an early start the next morning. The ground around the log cabin was trod hard and chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese, several dogs, some pigs, a crow and a buzzard swarmed about underfoot to pick up any crumbs or scraps of food that might be thrown out. *P* At dusk we sat around a long pine table on benches and old chairs with cowhide bottoms and had a hearty supper of corn bread, fried ham, sweet potatoes, and coffee. For desert we had corn bread and sorghum syrup. After supper we sat in a half circle in front of the fireplace filled with blazing logs, because there was a slight chill in the air.

P The day had been a perfect one of bright sunshine, warm and pleasant, sky blue and the landscape full of soft colors, the uncut grass of the prairie having dried and bleached to a silvery-golden brown. *P* That night two quilts were laid on the floor for father and I to sleep upon. The family was so large that part of them slept in one room and part in the other. About 9 o'clock the men stepped out of doors while the women undressed and got into bed. At a signal from within the men entered, turned out the lamps, undressed in the dark and crawled into bed. During the night there was a chorus of snoring.

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The next morning, after an early breakfast, we left with the cattle. The man of the house and two sons volunteered to help us drive the cows as far as the prairie, a distance of six or eight miles, because of the difficulty of keeping them together with woods on both sides of the road. We had trouble almost from the start. First one and then another would break away from the herd and dash into the brush and one of the men would have to follow to head it off and drive it back. About a mile from the house we had to cross a shallow creek with muddy banks and bottom. We succeeded in getting our charges across, except one cow which waded into shallow water and deep mud, bogged down and refused to move. It took more than half an hour to dislodge her by tying a rope to her horns and dragging her out with one of the horses. Then every hundred yards or so this cow would "sul" (sulk), that is, stand stock still or lie down and refuse to move. We took turns kicking her, twisting her tail, punching her with sharp sticks, cracking our whips across her head and back. No matter what we did she took her own good time before she would budge. Once father was so exasperated that he threatened to build a fire under her. From time to time the other animals would make a dash for liberty. At one place a yearling dashed into the middle of a green briar patch. This was an almost impenetrable thicket of tangled vines armed with short stout thorns as sharp as needles. Father undertook to go after it and got caught in the thicket where he scratched his face and hands and tore his clothing. On this occasion I think he used his entire vocabulary of swear words and under the inspiration of the moment invented some new ones, to the respectful admiration of our companions. ^{"P} It was noon and half the day gone by the time

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when we got out of the woods and our helpers left us. We had brought nothing to eat or drink with us and would pass no town or store on the way. The horses and cattle were weary from their exertions and knowing that we had more than twenty miles yet to go we did not try to hurry them but simply kept them moving. We cut across the prairie and struck the trail west of Paris for home.

A norther.
About one o'clock a norther came up. The sky quickly lost its blue color and became ashen gray. The air turned to a haze. A cold wind sprang up from the north which soon turned into a half gale. The temperature dropped 40 or 50 degrees within less than an hour. Soon the air was full of driven sleet that cut like needles. We dismounted and led the horses to follow the cows on foot. We had to shout and use our whips to keep them moving. It was slow work and we went at a snail's pace. Fortunately the storm came from the right and we did not have to face it, or we could have made no headway. Even so we had trouble with the horses and the cows which wanted to turn tail to the biting wind and sleet. We were thinly clad and soon half frozen. Father set the example for me by constantly rubbing his face and ears, swinging his arms, and stamping his feet, to prevent freezing. We had difficulty in distinguishing the trail, but the horses seemed to know the way and that they were headed for home. Darkness came upon us when we were still six miles from home. Fortunately the sleet was intermittent and there was no snow. Otherwise we might not have found our way. At last, about 10 p.m., we turned into our own lane, reached the cowlot, put the horses in the stable, fed them some corn and hay and threw some out for the cattle, and stamped into the house. I had about reached the limit of my strength and endurance and was whimpering from the pain of aching

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limbs and frozen hands, feet, and ears. Mother was anxiously sitting up for us and had a hot fire in the little iron box stove. However, the cold wind came through the cracks in the walls so that within a few feet of the hot stove one could see his breath and water froze. The hot stove, some hot coffee, and some bread and butter, put new life into us, after which we crawled into cold beds and huddled up under the covers. This was the severest blizzard I ever saw in Texas. It lasted 48 hours and there were heavy losses of livestock. Within a week the weather was warm again. One of our neighbors told of a severe norther a few years before that was accompanied by a heavy fall of snow. One of his neighbors was out in it and got lost in the snow when darkness fell and he drove round and round with half a mile of his home. He was found frozen the next day.

Farm Work.

7 It was my job to help cut and bring in the stove wood, draw and bring in water, help feed the horses and cows, and to milk and churn, and as the days grew warmer and longer father and I worked in the fields together. We plowed the fields and orchard with a turning plow^w to cover up the dried grass and weeds and to give the newly turned earth a chance to air and weather. The stalks were still standing in last year's cotton and corn fields and had to be removed. The cotton stalks were broken close to the ground by dragging a log over them when the ground was frozen, and the corn stalks were dragged down and out when the ground was soft. Then the stalks were raked into windrows and burnt. Sometimes I drove the team and at other times followed behind to pick up stalks. After the stalks had dried out and the wind was in the right direction and not too strong

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Barren Woods.

It was my job to help out and bring in the stove wood, draw and bring in water, help feed the horses and cows, and to milk and churn, and as the days grew warmer and longer father and I worked in the fields together. We plowed the fields and orchard with a turning plow to cover up the dried grass and weeds and to give the newly turned earth a chance to air and weather. The stalks were still standing in last year's cotton and corn fields and had to be removed. The cotton stalks were broken close to the ground by dragging a log over them when the ground was frozen, and the corn stalks were dragged down and out when the ground was soft. Then the stalks were raked into wind-rows and burnt. Sometimes I drove the team and at other times followed behind to pick up stalks. After the stalks had dried out and the wind was in the right direction and not too strong

we set fire to the windrows. It was great sport to see the crimson flames eat their way through the dry material, leaving a trail of white ashes and charred pieces on the ground. Always I have liked the pungent odor of burning cornstalks. After the ground was cleared in this way it was plowed broadcast, that is, plowed in oblong sections or "lands", and left for some weeks to weather.

Prairie Fires.

7 Along about February most of the prairie was ^sburned off to get rid of the dry grass that remained from the previous year so that the new growth would come on with the opening of spring. Usually the firing began with enclosed pastures, the farmers often doing this at night and burning back against the wind along fence rows. To prevent the fences, which were then always made of split rails and often rotting and dry as tinder, from catching fire the farmer would often plow one or two furrows near the fence and would have a wagon and a barrel of water and some burlap bags with which to put out a fire in the fence, within easy reach. Then the fire would be started a few feet from the fence, allowed to burn almost to the rails and then be beaten out with the wet sacks, but allowed to burn freely against the wind away from the fence. Sometimes these fires would get beyond control and the family would burn holes in their clothing and singe their hair and eyebrows in a desperate attempt to keep the fire from spreading in the wrong direction. Almost invariably such a fire would escape into the open prairie outside. When this happened a great spectacle would be afforded, especially at night. Usually the grass and weeds would be waist or shoulder high and as dry as tinder. Flames would leap

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to a height of twenty feet ~~or more~~ and ~~if there was a strong~~
~~wind~~ smoke and sparks a hundred feet or more. If the wind was
blowing strong the flames would advance about as fast as a horse
could run. The spectacle would be accompanied by a crackling
roar that could be heard a mile or more away. Always there would
be flocks of birds, quail, prairie chicken, and rabbits fleeing
for their lives before it. When such a fire was seen approach-
ing a farm the neighbors for miles around would come to help
head it off. There was no organization, but the men knew ex-
actly what to do and did it without being told. They would hitch
double teams to heavy plows, run furrows across the path of the
approaching flams, and fire back against it. After such a fire
the prairie was a somber spectacle, black as coal and bristling
with the sharp stubs of the burned off bunch grass. However,
the farmers thought that the ashes and charred remains of the
grasses and weeds helped fertilize the grass, ~~burned~~ ^{burned} up the
weed seeds, ~~and~~ made better grazing after the spring rains. At
any rate the prairies were a beautiful sight when the new grass
started making a fresh, tender, green, velvety carpet from hori-
zon to horison.

Spring

7 The last of February or early March we made garden,
planting potatoes, peas, lettuce, radishes, and other hardy
vegetables. The peach and plum trees flushed out in a mass of
pure color, deep pink or white. Many of the trees and shrubs
along the creeks and branches, such as wild plum, black haw,
hawthorn, and redbud were likewise decorated. In March spring
opened. The prairies became a soft velvety green and the buds
on the trees swelled and burst and unfolded their leafy banners,

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to a height of twenty feet or more and

no. 10 of 1903

displaying all sorts of beautiful colors, purple, red, yellow, and green. ~~Myriads~~²⁴ of daisies, buttercups, violets, and anemones showed through the young grass. Insect life awoke and the birds began to sing their cheery mating songs and to build nests in bush and tree and on the ground. The ~~drumming~~^{muffled} of the prairie chickens could be heard at dawn. The golden yellow breasts of the meadow lark, the red breast of the robin, the scarlet coat of the redbird, the blue uniform of the jay, the iridescent gray of the dove, the burnished jet of blackbird and crow, could be seen flitting about in the trees, or in the grass, or on the newly plowed fields, or joyously flying overhead during the day. Most glorious of all was the characteristic song of the mocking birds as they fluttered up and down above a tree top or barn roof in a perfect ecstasy of delight.

In March we planted our corn. We first laid off rows three and a half feet apart by throwing two furrows together with a turning plow, following and leveling these off, crushing the clods and pulverizing the earth, by dragging a log lengthwise of the rows; then opening a furrow in the middle of the flattened ridge with a "bull tongue," or single-shovel plow. Next we marked off rows the same distance apart ~~and~~ crosswise and at the intersections of the rows dropped three or four kernels of corn from ears selected for their size and color. These were covered by again dragging a log lengthwise of the rows. By this method we had the corn growing in check rows so that it could be horse cultivated both ways and thereby reduce the hand labor with the hoe required to keep weeds from smothering the corn.

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The tender vegetables such as beans, cucumbers, and melons, and the cotton were planted in April after all danger of frost was over. The ground for cotton was prepared the same as for corn except the cross checking. The cotton seed was sown by hand in a continuous drill and covered with a drag. In all these operations I soon acquired skill, especially in dropping seed. With a bag full of seed slung over my shoulder I soon developed a set of mechanical motions that were almost automatic: With corn, it was a long step forward, and without looking a thrust of the hand into the bag, a closing of three fingers on as many kernels, a quick withdrawal, and a drop of the seed ^{at} ~~to~~ the spot desired. With the fuzzy cotton seed the operation consisted of grabbing a handful and with a step forward throwing it in a stream so that it would be ^{evenly} ~~evenly~~ distributed in the furrow over a space a yard or more in length. Both corn and cotton seed could be planted in this way as fast as one could walk. Mother and sister planted the garden, father and I the fields. *P* With what joy we worked. It was our own farm. We used our own team and tools. It was to be our own crop. How enthusiastically we worked to prepare the ground and get the seed planted before it rained, because a rain might interrupt and delay planting one or two weeks. How full of hope we were that the season would be favorable, that we would have a good crop, that we would have cotton to sell with which to pay off the mortgage, and that we would have an ample supply of feed and seed for the next year.

After the planting was done and all through the growing season we anxiously watched the clouds after each prolonged dry spell, knowing that if rain did not come the crop would be a

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failure and our efforts vain; and how anxiously we watched for the sun in a period of prolonged rain when the ground was too wet to work and the crabgrass and weeds were growing rapidly into solid mats, checking the growth of the crop plants and piling up work for us whenever we could get on the ground.

But above all how we watched the young plants emerge from the ground, the tiny, delicate, green, curled leaves of the corn coming up at regular intervals in squares so that one could see the rows, faintly at first but growing plainer and plainer day by day, running straight in two directions and diagonally in two directions. How crooked were some of the rows we first laid off, like Hogarth's line of beauty, mother said, but father only swore, and the neighbors smiled when they saw them.

As soon as the corn was up so that the rows could be followed it had to be cultivated, first in one direction and then in the other, and the same after every rain to keep the crabgrass in check. Father bought a double riding cultivator on credit so that both sides of a row could be cultivated at one operation until the plants got too high for the machine to pass over them without breaking the stalks, when we had to resort to one-horse "sweeps," a thin, sharp, triangular plow that slid under the surface, cut off the crabgrass and weeds, and left a mulch of loose earth on the surface.

Within a few days after planting the cotton came up and showed as a narrow ribbon of green in the middle of the seedbed. At first there were only two small, stiff, shiny leaves on a thick but tender stalk. A few days later the plants would be four inches high with a second pair of leaves below the first.

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At that stage it was necessary to ~~thin the cotton, that is~~
"chop" the cotton, that is, remove the surplus plants with a hoe
so as to leave two or three plants standing together and spaced
six to nine inches apart. After chopping we would follow with
the double cultivator to break the crust and remove the grass
and weeds on the sides of the bed and throw a little loose mulch
to the plants. If these operations were delayed the small thick-
ly set plants would grow up with thin weak stems and fall over
when chopped out or thinned.

The worst pest we had to combat on this gray silt soil was
crabgrass. Apparently the soil was full of the seed. Immedi-
ately after a shower or rain, or even a heavy dew, the ground
would be covered with a delicate green ~~mat~~ coat almost like mould
and in another 24 hours ^{it} would be an inch in height and grow an
inch or more each day and form a solid mat of roots and tops very
hard to remove with plow, hoe, and fingers from around the ten-
der plants of corn or cotton. Unless kept removed it would choke
out the plants and no crop would mature. For this reason we had
to keep the plows going to prevent the grass from matting. When,
as sometimes happened, we could not get on the fields for a week
or ten days because of rain or other work, it was slow grueling
work removing the grass. Sometimes, following heavy rains when
the grass would get ahead of us, there would come a hot dry spell
and the ground would bake almost as hard as cement. When this
happened, a plow could not penetrate the hard soil and a heavy hoe
would rebound from the surface with a metallic ring without cut-
ting the grass. The only thing to do in such case was to keep
the hoe filed sharp as a razor and shave the grass off at the
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At that stage it was necessary to ~~thin the plants~~ to leave two or three plants standing together and spaced six to nine inches apart. After cropping we would follow with the double cultivator to break the crust and remove the grass and weeds on the sides of the bed and throw a little loose mulch to the plants. If these operations were delayed the small thickly set plants would grow up with thin weak stems and fall over when chopped out or thinned.

The worst pest we had to combat on this gray silt soil was crabgrass. Apparently the soil was full of the seed. Immediately after a shower or rain, or even a heavy dew, the ground would be covered with a delicate green mat about an inch high and in another 24 hours would be an inch in height and grow an inch or more each day and form a solid mat of roots and tops very hard to remove with plow, hoe, and fingers from around the tender plants of corn or cotton. Unless kept removed it would choke out the plants and no crop would mature. For this reason we had to keep the plow going to prevent the grass from matting. When, as sometimes happened, we could not get on the fields for a week or ten days because of rain or other work, it was slow grueling work removing the grass. Sometimes, following heavy rains when the grass would get ahead of us, there would come a hot dry spell and the ground would bake almost as hard as cement. When this happened, a plow could not penetrate the hard soil and a heavy hoe would rebound from the surface with a metallic ring without cutting the grass. The only thing to do in such cases was to keep the hoe filed sharp as a razor and shave the grass off at the surface, which required great skill to avoid injuring the plants.

Our crops were planted with hope, ~~and~~ enthusiasm, ^{and} ~~with~~ dreams of an abundant harvest, reduction of debt, purchase of new clothing and other necessities of which we were badly in need; they were tended with loving care that involved long hours of hard manual labor from sunup to sundown, with horses to feed and water, harness and unharness, cows to milk, milk to churn, wood to cut, meals to cook, and other work in addition. But we were all young and hopeful and all worked together for the common purpose of making a living and paying off the mortgage so that we might own our own home and be independent. Mother and sister worked in the fields the same as father and I from planting time to harvest which, in the case of cotton, extended from the beginning of April to the end of November. The spring was favorable and we had a good prospect until the middle of June, after which there was very little rain and the corn and cotton suffered. The foliage of the crop and garden plants curled up in the heat of summer, the corn ears did not fill out, and the cotton shed its squares (young fruits).

School.

7 Realizing that only a partial crop could be harvested, father again went to Paris and worked in the foundry during the summer and early fall, leaving mother, sister and I to finish with the crop. Sister and I went to school for a few weeks in July and August. The school was at Maxey about a mile and a half from our place and on the prairie half a mile beyond Sander's Creek. School was held only after "lay-by" time (after corn and cotton were too large to cultivate) in summer and again in the winter months. We walked to and from school, barefooted of course. We followed a wagon road across the prairie north of our farm,

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passed a small farm on the edge of the timber occupied by an Irish family named Connolly; on through the timber and turning east went down a gentle slope, across a narrow glade and into the belt of timber through which ran Sander's Creek, through the woods on the other side, across another strip of prairie to the county road which we followed into a lane between two farms and passy the one store to the schoolhouse. We were usually joined en route by three or four other children that lived in widely scattered cabins on our side of the creek. ~~The~~ The schoolhouse was a one-room frame building with one door and four windows, a pine table and splint-bottomed chair for the teacher, some pine slab benches for the ~~children~~ pupils, and a small blackboard on the wall. There were perhaps 20 or 30 pupils in attendance, some of whom walked three or four miles. ~~The~~ The teacher was a large, flabby, elderly, illiterate man, with a bald head and a straggly white beard streaked with tobacco juice, and ~~xxxxxx~~ wore a wooden peg in lieu of the leg he had lost in the war. His greatest accomplishment was his ability to sit in a chair without moving for hours at a time, the chair tilted back, his good leg resting in a comfortable position of the table in front of him, industriously chewing plug tobacco and spitting from time to time with great precision at a knot hole in the floor. He was successful in hitting the mark nine times out of ten, as I ascertained by actual count. I ~~xxx~~ think perhaps he could read a little and do simple sums in his head. I am not sure whether he could manage long division, but I soon found out that he knew nothing of fractions. As soon as I realized his deficiencies I ceased to regard him as of any importance, except as an object of interest along with the other pupils, and I proceeded to study

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or rather review my small collection of textbooks at my own sweet will and convenience. The teacher rarely knew whether a pupil answered the questions in the textbooks correctly. If in reading a pupil hesitated in pronouncing an unfamiliar word he would say, "Oh, just say 'beeswax' and go on." This they sometimes did. Usually the pupils were well behaved and orderly, ~~ly, their energy and spirit of play having been worked out of them in the field~~ ly, because they had been disciplined by hard work on isolated farms, it was a relief to them just to sit still in a room, and among strange companions they were all on their dignity, like a lot of Indians. Friday afternoons were devoted to exercises in "elocution, ~~and~~ ^{te}etiquet^e, and catechism," with visiting mothers present. Each pupil was required to learn a "piece" by heart and recite it. This was an exoruciating experience for the shy youngsters and their desperate efforts to remember and repeat what they had committed to memory in a sing-song way was highly diverting to a disinterested spectator.

In the "etiquet^{te}" exercise the boys were one at a time required to approach a girl standing in the middle of the room, place his hand over his heart, bow to her and say "Pardon me, but I am Mr. Jones and am pleased to make your acquaintance." The young lady would nod her head with a little jerk, grin in a sickly manner which ws supposed to be languishing and say "I am Miss Smith and am most happy to meet you." Then 'Miss Smith would introduce Mr. Jones to another girl, and Mr. Jones would introduce the two girls to another boy. The girls seemed to enjoy this exercise, but the boys felt and looked very sheepish.

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As a closing exercise there would be a sort of catechism of the Bible. The teacher would ask, "Who created the earth and the heavens and all there is thereon and therein?" Some bright pupil braver than the others would hold up his hand and shout triumphantly ~~Xx~~ "God". Then would follow in order questions as to who was the first man, the first woman, the wisest man, the strongest man, who had a coat of many colors, who was swallowed by a whale, and so on. All of which was very edifying and gratifying to the little band of weathered mothers in calico dresses ^{and sunbonnets} who had ridden or walked, several miles perhaps, to see their offspring shine on a public occasion.

After one week in this school I announced to my parents that I knew more than the teacher of that school and did not care to go any more, and they readily acquiesced.

7 ^{Reading.} During the greater part of this year I had nothing to read except the "Youth's Companion," and occasional newspapers, and these I read religiously, every line and word, including all the advertisements. This publication sent me a wonderful premium book with detailed and alluring descriptions and illustrations of the premiums that would be given for obtaining new subscribers. I very much wanted to obtain one or more of those fascinating premiums, but knew that it was useless to ask any of the poverty stricken neighbors to spent \$1.75, the subscription price, for current literature. However, while father was working in town and boarding with the Garner family I suggested that ^{maybe} Mr. Garner would pay for a subscription for Eddie. In the autumn father brought out the subscription price and I sent it to the publishers, after spending many thrilling hours

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in selecting the premium. Of the ~~four things~~ many things I desired my choice finally narrowed down to a chest of tools with which to make things, a steam engine to see how it worked, a little printing press with which I dreamed I might make money printing visiting cards for the neighbors, and a book. The book won,--but which one? Again and again I studied the list and tried to imagine myself the proud possessor of each one described. Finally I decided upon "Drifting Around the World." How impatiently I waited for the book to come and made several trips to the grocery-store-postoffice at Maxey to inquire for it. What a thrill I got when it came and I carried my treasure home, opened the package, and found an octavo volume in stiff boards with paper cover and colored^e pictures of icebergs, polar bears, castles, and Chinese junks, and other interesting things on the outside. Needless to say that I read and reread it from cover to cover and studied the illustrations with breathless interest. It described voyages in a sailing ship to many lands with a description of the peculiar customs and characteristics of the people and countries. I was fascinated and began to dream of visiting all those countries and seeing with my own eyes the wonderful things described.

neighbors.

7 During our first year on the farm we made few acquaintances among the neighbors, but this year we began to meet them and have a speaking, if not a visiting, acquaintance with them. Our nearest neighbor was a family of renters on the farm across the lane from ours. They were rough people and had only a baby, so my sister and I were not interested in them. On the farm adjoining ours to the south ~~was~~ lived the Hall family, but their house could not be seen from ours because it was on the far side of their

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farm and rising ground intervened. The head of the family was a hardworking, middle aged, big, robust, hard-fisted, ignorant, surly, disagreeable but very pious old sinner who could read and, as he said, was called of God to preach to save his neighbors from hell and damnation. He preached only at revival meetings at lay-by time when ⁱⁿ ~~at~~ there was little farm work to do and always with the understanding that he receive his share of the contributions. He regarded our family with open disapproval because we were "Yankees," not professing Christians, and father was blasphemous and would surely fry in hell fire. His wife was a large, flabby, and very prolific woman who was rarely seen away from the house and always with a baby in her arms. They had a large family ranging in age from one to twenty-five years of sons and daughters, all large ~~and healthy~~ for their age and healthy. The two of most interest to me were Il^uys, about 14, and Burrus, about 9.

The Rileys

7 Across the road from the Hall place was another small farm with a one room pine shanty occupied by the Rileys, an engineer and his bride, both Irish and newly married. Both spoke with a strong brogue which never failed to interest me. Mr. Riley had been engineer on a passenger train somewhere in New York and had the misfortune to ditch his engine. For some reason, probably because he had been drinking, he did not wait for the investigation that followed but quic^{ck}ly and quickly emigrated to Texas. He was regarded as the plutocrat of the neighborhood because he had a steady job and regular wages running the engine that pumped water into the tank for the T. & P. engines at two watering places for which he was paid \$80 per month. The tanking stations were about eight miles apart and an equal distance from

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his farm. After supper he would walk eight miles to one of the stations, run the engine until the tank was full, board a passing freight train and drop off at the second tank, fill it, and walk back eight miles to his shack, get his breakfast and do a hard day's work on the farm. He ^{was} ~~was~~ a mule for work. ^P I liked to watch him plow. He was full of energy, impetuous, and very determined. Also he had a remarkable swear word vocabulary, quite as large as that of my father but more interesting because it was different and was adorned by the richness of his Irish brogue. On one occasion we were both plowing corn in fields on opposite sides of the lane. At intervals we would reach the ends of the rows with ^{only} the narrow lane between and sometimes we would call out to each other in a sociable way and exchange gossip. During the forenoon his team of ~~xxxxx~~ mules, in making the turn at the end of the row, got their feet outside the trace chains and one of them even turned around and faced him. The way he talked to that erring mule and the swear words and expressions he used was enough to make a horse laugh and would have made his fortune on the vaudeville stage. He abused the mule's ⁿ ~~a~~ ancestors, derided its appearance, criticized its ears, and denied it the intelligence of an insect. The mule did not respond, but with unruffled spirit looked at him with mild interest. The more Mr. Riley talked the angrier he became and he did not seem to understand why the mule did not answer back or take offence at what he said. Losing all control of himself he fell into a rage, dropped the reins, leaped to the mule's head, grasped the bit in one hand and with vigorous kicks on the mule's belly tried by main strength and awkwardness to force the mule into the proper position. At the first resounding thump the mule let fly with

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its heels and began rearing and plunging, but Mr. Riley hung on to the bridle so that the mule's heels could not reach him. The mule's heels flashed out and in with the quickness and regularity of an engine piston. What joy it was for me to hear Mr. Riley swear and the remarks he made, and to see how active and strong he was, how red he got in the face, and how rich and difficult to understand was his brogue, like a foreign language, and the performance made me think of a jingle I had heard about the "Wild Irishman," and I felt that I was looking at the original of that jingle then. In my isolated and rather lonely life there were few human contacts outside of our small family so that a performance like this was a treat, almost as good as going to a circus.

In the following year Mr. Riley was digging a pond near his barn to supply water for the stock. It was in July after the crops were laid by and he hired me at 25 cents a day to drive his team of mules while he held the big plow or the scraper. I found that the mules were hard-headed and hard-bitted and that when they started in the wrong direction I was too light in weight to pull them back, even though I dug my heels in the earth and leaned back on the reins, ^{or} to make much impression on them. Then Mr. Riley would become eloquent and tell the mules what he thought of them and of their past, present, and future.

One of the mules was a veteran and troubled with indigestion and colicky pains. Twice when we came out after the noon hour we found this mule lying on its side, its belly distended and heaving, and emitting heavy groans. Again Mr. Riley would tell the mule, in rich Irish brogue, what he thought of him and what his unhappy end would be.

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I took the noonday meal with Mr. and Mrs. Riley. Thereⁱ one room was only about 12 feet square, had one door and one window, and was furnished with a small cook stove, table, two chairs, and a bed. I had to sit on a pine box. Mrs. Ryley, daughter of an Irish section hand, was much younger than her husband, had a bad temper, and was unhappy from loneliness because he was away filling his tanks at night and working in the fields by day; and she rarely saw any of her neighbors, could not read, was not interested in the farm, had little to do but look after the one room and get three meals a day, which she did badly. One day at the noon hour the couple had an argument. He had brought home a piece of denim and asked her to make him a pair of trousers. She said most emphatically that she could not make a pair of trousers because she had never seen a pair cut out and would not know how to sew the pieces together. "I can't do it and I won't do it" she said. "Yes you can and you will," he replied, "as foine as ^{ah} any taylor." "I won't," said she. "Ye will," said he, "or I'll bate the life out of ye." "But I don't know how," she protested. "I'll cut thim out fer ye," he replied, which he proceeded to do. He smoothed out the piece of cloth on the bed and, laying an old pair of trousers over it for a pattern, cut the cloth to match, leaving a liberal margin for the seams. "An now," he said as he finished "y'll be sewin' thim up while Oi'm aw^uarking and have a divil of a nice ~~supper~~ pair of pants reddy for me in the ^aevenin." He went out to look after the mules while I lingered behind a moment. I could see that the wife was very angry. "Oh ho," she said, "anⁱ so he'll bate the loife out ov me, wull he if I don't sew thim up fer him.

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Yis, Mr. Riley, Di'll be sewin' thim up, but much good will it do ye," and with that she snatched up the scissors and deliberately cut off a strip two inches wide all round each piece and put the strips in the cook stove. There was a look of malignant triumph in her face as she did this, followed by a frown and an ugly look at me. She said "Mi b'y, don't ye ever tell Mr. Riley what I done. If ye do he'll kill me and my spirit will come back and hant ye and naver let ye sleep or rist as long as ye live." However her face cleared when she saw me grinning and chuckling at the performance. I should like to have seen Mr. Riley and heard what he had to say when he tried on those trousers, but that privilege was denied me. I never heard any more about it and was too polite to inquire.

The Connelys:

7 South of the Hall and Riley farms was open prairie for several miles to the nearest farm beyond. Across the prairie to the north was the Connely place that we passed on the way to the Maxey school. Their house was a duplicate of ours, one room with a lean-to kitchen, but in it lived a family of seven, father, mother, two daughters and three sons. The father was a little dried up middleaged man whom it was difficult to understand because of his brogue. He had a small head, straw-colored hair, a retreating and much wrinkled forehead, weak blue eyes, an insignificant nose, an exceptionally long upper lip, and a retreating chin. His face bore a remarkable resemblance to that of a monkey which was added to by the smallness of his body, the disproportionate length of his arms and ^{the} shortness of his legs that were bowed outward. His wife also was quite diminutive, but bright, animated, and unusually quick witted. They had a grown son head and shoulders taller than

Yes, Mr. Riley, I'll be sewing 'till up, but much good will it do
 ye," and with that she snatched up the scissors and deliberately
 cut off a strip two inches wide all round each piece and put the
 strips in the cook stove. There was a look of malignant triumph
 in her face as she did this, followed by a frown and an ugly look

at me. She said "M'd'y, don't ye ever tell Mr. Riley what I
 done. If ye do he'll kill me and my spirit will come back and
 haunt ye and never let ye sleep or rest as long as ye live." How-

ever her face cleared when she saw me grinning and chuckling at
 the performance. I should like to have seen Mr. Riley and heard
 what he had to say when he tried on those trousers, but that privi-
 lege was denied me. I never heard any more about it and was too

polite to inquire.

The Connells

South of the Hall and Riley farms was open prairie for sev-
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his parents; two grown daughters, one a blond and the other a brunette and both attractive; a tall, lank, awkward youth of 15 named Tim, and a boy of 12 named Johnie. They were all good natured and witty and, of course, were devout Catholics.

One Sunday afternoon in the summer Mr. Connolly called at our place and father and I walked with him into the peach orchard. Under one of the trees was a hive of bees. In passing near the hive a bee struck Mr. Connolly in the face and disappeared. He struck wildly at it and then grasped his long upper lip with his finger and thumb and began to utter peculiar sounds that were unintelligible but seemed to express distress. Father asked what was the matter. He replied "Faith an bedad, Sorr, wan of thim bees put his little fut on my face an it bur-rns like fire." He was so comical that both father and I had difficulty in keeping our faces straight to avoid giving offense to our guest. When the little Irishman had gone I asked father if he did not think it was funny and he replied "Faith an bedad, ~~Sorr~~ me bye, a bee sure has a hot little fut on him."

7

Autumn.

As father had foreseen, we made only about half a crop of corn and a third of a crop of cotton because of the long summer drouth. The crop matured and was harvested early and father remained on the farm only long enough to help get the corn into the crib and to sell the two bales of cotton we had raised and picked. With the proceeds of the cotton and what he was able to save from his wages he paid the interest on the mortgage and bought groceries and supplies for the house. Our clothing did not cost much. We each had one pair of shoes a year. Most of the time we went barefooted. Our clothes were made by mother with cloth that father brought out from town. She had no sewing

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machine so the work had to be done by hand. My uniform was a hickory shirt and a pair of denim pants, a battered straw hat in summer, and in winter a coat, vest, and cap. *P* In the fall, as a reward for my year's work, father presented me with a small double-barrelled shotgun. It was the smallest I have ever seen, but I was immensely proud of it. I usually took the gun with me to the field and sometimes before driving the team to the barnlot just before sundown I would tie the team securely and take a run through the woods near the creek and shoot a few squirrels, quail, or rabbits, so that we often had fresh game in lieu of fat salt bacon.

Pneumonia:

7 About this time I had my first serious illness. The doctor called it typhoid-pneumonia. The doctor came out from Paris two or three times especially to see me and prescribed rest, a light diet, and medicines. I became much emaciated and prostrated with weakness and was confined to bed for several weeks. Mother was much distressed and kept me alive with raw egg stirred up with whiskey, which I disliked intensely but was too feeble to protest effectively. At times I was delirious. After the crisis passed there was a long period of convalescence and I remember suffering greatly from what mother called "hysterics," which was a new word for me. This condition developed during the early period of convalescence while I was yet very weak. I resented having any one look at me--their eyes seemed so big and staring and their interest so impertinent. If sister approached the bed and looked at me I became furious. I did not mind mother or my dog Carlo looking at me because I felt that they belonged to me, but I resented the cat. Once it jumped upon the bed and calmly

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 and looked at me I became furious. I did not mind mother or my
 dog Carlo looking at me because I felt that they belonged to me,
 but I resented the rest. Once it jumped upon the bed and calmly

gazed into my eyes. It was just out of my reach and I was helpless and I began to cry from sheer vexation until mother appeared and removed it. For ten days or more I suffered acute pains in my lungs. Mother thought a mustard plaster would be of benefit. How innocent it looked when she brought one to me. When first applied it seemed as cold as ice and I protested. She smiled and assured me it would be allright in a minute. So it was as it began to warm up. The trouble was that it did not stop warming up but got hotter and hotter until it became unbearable and had to be taken off.

My convalescence was slow and I had no appetite for ordinary food. Father brought me a can of "Cove Oysters," the only kind ~~xx~~ obtainable in the interior. Mother warmed them up as a stew. They were the first I had ever tasted and I thought them delicious. While eating them sister and a girl friend sat and watched me with envious longing eyes. I ^{felt} a twinge of conscience, but I was the patient, wasn't I, and so I ignored any impulse I might have had to divide with them; in fact, their longing only intensified my relish for the delicacy. Finally the girl friend grunted audibly and in an abstracted sort of way as if talking to herself, ~~said~~ "I like oysters." "Yes," I snapped back, "but you havn't had typhoid-pneumonia," which seemed to me quite sufficient to settle the question.

As the days went by I began to crave something sour and dreamed of cranberries. When I was strong enough to walk again I explored the woods along the creek for wild grapes. I ate them in great quantities and for many days. I have been fond of wild grapes ever since and have eaten them freely whenever I had the

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(1881)

E-186.

opportunity. Years later when apendicitis was invented by the doctors, became fashionable, and people were told that grapes were a frequent cause of the trouble, I was sceptical and have remained so to this day.

Because my recovery was slow I was rather inactive during the winter months except for the ^{ai} daily routine of chores.

1882.

However, I was fully recovered in time for spring plowing and planting.

Migratory Ducks and Geese.

7 In January the wild ducks and geese began to migrate north. These migrations were on an extensive scale. Long lines of ducks and geese in "V" formation would pass over on their way south in October and would alight in the fields and shallow ponds, especially after rains. Then they would thin out or perhaps entirely disappear until the last of January and into February. During these migrations the fowl would stop over night and sometimes for a week to feed and rest. They would congregate in the fields and on the prairies in such numbers as to cover many acres. Always they had pickets out to give the alarm whenever a man ~~approach~~ approached within gunshot, which they seemed to be able to judge within a few yards. At the signal of alarm the entire flock would rise with a tremendous noise of flapping wings and cries. Often a shot at random into the flock before it had time to get under way would bring down several birds. Sometimes at night an immense flock would pass overhead in such numbers that a shot in the direction of the noise would bring down a number of them. Usually some ducks and occasionally a few geese would remain behind the main flock and could be found in the small ponds, sloughs, and

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water holes in the creek, but they were wary. This spring I shot many ducks, but never got close enough to the geese to bring one down. My pigmy shotgun would not carry very far but scattered the charge of shot so that I rarely missed anything within range. I knew nothing about open and closed seasons for game, and I doubt if any one else did in Texas at that time, so I shot anything in the shape of game whenever I had the opportunity.

Soils.

7 Again we planted our crops with unbounded hope and enthusiasm and dreamed dreams of making a good crop and getting out of debt. By this time I had become a full hand and could do anything on the farm within my strength. I also knew pretty well the requirements and behavior of plants, and by personal contact with bare feet and hands and close watching day after day for many months had learned a good deal about the color, texture, and qualities of different soils at different depths. While the soil on our farm was classed as "gray" land because it was in the zone of gray, compact silt, nevertheless there was wide variation even in a single acre. Most of it was true gray silt, but there were patches of yellow clay, red clay, blue clay, clay loam, gray loam, black loam, sandy loam, and in spots almost pure sand, each shading off into the other, each varying in depth to the underlying clay, and there were a few spots impregnated with alkali on which cotton would come up and flourish until it was about six inches in height and then stop growing and ultimately die, whereas corn would continue to make some growth but produced only nubbins. There were several mounds on our place, that is, low circular, rounded mounds, 30 to 50 feet in diameter and 3 to 6

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(1882)

E--188.

above the general level. One had difficulty in plowing over these mounds, because as the horses ascended the slope to the higher level their increased height tended to lift the plow out of the ground, and upon descending on the other side the reverse happened and the plow would tend to bury itself. I speculated a good deal as to the origin of these mounds but never arrived at a satisfactory conclusion. I often thought of digging into the center of a mound to see what was underneath but was either too busy with other things or too tired to undertake it. Curiosity never proved quite strong enough to overcome the desire for rest when the opportunity came. These flat circular mounds were common features of the prairie landscape, especially in the Red River country to the north. They were so numerous in one section near Red River that it was known as Mound Prairie. Rumor said that they contained Indian relics, but I never met any one who had actually seen the relics.

Various activities.
➤ Also I began to be well informed about birds, insects and reptiles, because nothing that moved during the daylight hours within range of vision escaped my notice.

This spring cut worms appeared in our fields in incredible numbers. We had a large flock of chickens, a few turkeys, and some guineas. These fowls foraged near the house and gorged themselves on the worms. One old rooster especially was a glutton. While the cutworms were with us I watched this rooster greedily devour them and a little later he would lay down on his side under a peach tree and apparently suffer from stomach trouble.

Scarcely a day passed in warm weather that I did not kill one or more snakes along the edge of the fields. Mostly they were black snakes or chicken snakes and harmless, but be-

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cause they showed fight I always went for them with a stick.

In the spring I took two small birds from their nests and raised them. One was a gold finch and the other a scissortail. Both thrived and grew to maturity. The finch was very small, bright yellow underneath, with brown and black streaks on the back and wings. It had a cheery song and when it reached its full size I released it. It remained with us for a long time afterwards, flying in and out of the house at will and following me into the fields, either resting on my shoulder or fluttering in the air over my head, flying off to a tree or bush only to return to my shoulder. Finally he disappeared, probably after finding a mate and setting up housekeeping. The scissortail was much larger, with snow white breast, several tail feathers longer than its body, black above and white underneath. He also was released when nearly mature and was quite as much of a pet as the finch. He spent much of his time in the poplar tree in front of the house, but when I returned from the field he would fly to my shoulder, or come into the house during meal time and take crumbs from my hand. He also would sometimes follow me for considerable distances, on one occasion several miles, if I were afoot but never if I was on a horse. Apparently he did not recognize me on a horse. Finally he, too, found a mate. At first he tried his best to induce his mate to enter the house or to light on my shoulder with him, but she was too shy and timid. His visits became less and less frequent and finally ceased altogether.

This was an active year for me. Aside from the farm work, and much of it fell to me during father's absences at the shop in town, when the ground was too dry and hard ^{or too wet} for plowing or hoeing, I took long tramps with the gun, explore^d the creeks

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(1882)

E--190.

and belts of timber along them and the isolated groves on the prairie, study every strange plant, flower, insect, reptile, bird and wild animal, hunt for colored pebbles and petrified objects in the creek beds, make all sorts of things, and live an imaginary life of leisure and travel. *¶* With some small wooden boxes I made some flasks, ~~mixxx~~ made moulds of various things, melted lead in an iron spoon over a small fire, poured it into the moulds, and produced metal buttons, coins, and other objects. By the side of the house was an old carpenter's bench and father had a fairly complete set of tools. With these I made all sorts of diminutive farm tools, boxes, axe handles, bows and arrows, windmills and other things. To one of the windmills I attached a pulley that would operate a small churn, because one of my dreams was to invent a churn that could be operated by mechanical power instead of my aching arms. I planned many things, including a wagon to be made of bois d'are that was to be very light and strong and practically indestructible. *¶* Also I pondered a good deal over perpetual motion. I understood, I know not how, that an enormous prize was offered to the inventor of perpetual motion, but suspected that it was impossible. However, I remembered that in the class in physics in Mrs. Buckner's school it was stated that in a vacuum there was no friction; also the statement that "action and reaction are equal," and that anything once set in motion will continue in motion forever unless the motion is overcome by opposing forces, such as friction or other form of resistance. The idea founded on this recollection that tantalized me most was that of creating a vacuum to remove all resistance, then start a rubber ball bounding back and forth in the vacuum. Surely if the principles of physics I remembered

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were correct, then the ball would have to bounce back and forth perpetually. Concerning the feasibility of this device I had little or no doubt at the time. However, I assumed that the object of discovering perpetual motion was to utilize it in some way, but I could conceive of no way of utilizing the motion of a bouncing ball within a vacuum without either destroying the vacuum or retarding and ultimately stopping the ~~ball~~ motion of the ball, so I reluctantly gave up the idea.

Surveying Party.

7 In the spring considerable excitement was caused throughout the thinly settled country by the appearance of a party of civil engineers who surveyed a route for the right of way of a proposed railway. They were in our part of the country about a week. How I envied them, their light and agreeable work, the good clothes they wore, the instruments of precision they used, and the fabulous salaries they were said to get. Their untold wealth was evidenced by the fact that they bought the entire stock of canned goods in the store at Maxey and did not haggle of the price. We thought our fortune was made when the right-of-way was marked by little white stakes diagonally across our farm and within fifty feet of our house. I was diffident but proud when the surveying party stopped to inspect my windmill and churn. We never heard anything more of the railway project after the party disappeared over the horizon.

Sunday Recreations.

7 By this time I had become acquainted with other boys in the neighborhood. Sunday forenoon on our farm was usually spent in putting the farm tools and harness in order, doing odd jobs and making necessary repairs, so that everything would be ready for use the coming week. But the afternoon was regarded as a half-

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Sunday Recollections. By this time I had become acquainted with other boys in the neighborhood. Sunday forenoon on our farm was usually spent in putting the farm tools and harness in order, doing odd jobs and making necessary repairs, so that everything would be ready for use the coming week. But the afternoon was regarded as a half-

holiday and usually Silas Hall and I got together. Sometimes we would visit the Conolly place and join the Conolly boys, and the four of us would run races, wrestle, jump, or hunt rabbits, or go in swimming in the creek. The waterholes in the creek usually had a few perch and catfish and occasionally a water moccasin in them. After we had floundered about in the shallow water for awhile it would become muddy and the fish would come to the surface so that they could be caught with the hands. The snakes usually crawled out on the bank and were quickly dispatched. Sometimes we found a snake that had swallowed a fish.

Reading.

7 I continued to read the Youth's Companion and such newspapers as came to us from relatives in the north. A neighbor who lived a mile or more higher up on Sander's Creek, a newcomer, loaned mother her entire library, consisting of a copy of the "Tale of Two Cities," by Dickens. This I read and reread with the greatest interest.

Another School.

2 In the summer months mother opened a school in a pine shed on the Smith place about half a mile across the prairie from our farm. Perhaps a dozen children attended the school beside my sister and I. We sat on a puncheon bench, that is slabs from logs with the flat side up and the rounded side down and stout pegs inserted at the ends for legs. Partly because the teacher was my mother, partly because I discovered that I was quicker at solving problems in arithmetic than she, and probably because I unconsciously tried to show off before the girl pupils, I fear I was lacking in respect for the teacher at times. At any rate I remember hearing her tell father one night when she thought I was asleep that she did not know "what had got into Lee," which

made me very penitent and thereafter I tried to set ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~
~~me~~ an example of good behavior in the school. My recollection is
that the school lasted only a month because of the short interval
between lay-by time and cotton picking time, and the poverty of
the ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ patrons of the school.

→ A musicale.

Great excitement was caused^d when one day a printed poster
was left at our house announcing that a world famous musician
would give an entertainment that evening at the Maxey school
house and that the price of admission would be ten cents each.
Mother said that sister and I could go, gave us each ten cents,
and saw that we were washed and combed and had on our only suit
of clean clothes. We were both barefoot, of course. Shortly
before sundown my sister and I walked the mile and a half to the
schoolhouse, arriving at dusk. In the schoolhouse we found the
musician, a tall man with black hair and a heavy black mustache,
with an accordion. We looked upon the world renowned musician
with awe and upon his instrument with wonder. It was large and
of rich mahogany inlaid with pearl and had a bewildering array
of silver keys. He sat in the teacher's chair with a kerosene
lamp before him and the accordion beside it on the table. At the
end of half an hour only four other young people had arrived. Be-
cause of the meager attendance the musician declared that the
concert was off and that the admission fee would be returned,
but inasmuch as the six patrons of art had come so far and waited
so patiently he would play one piece for us. He did so and we
were greatly entertained. We thought it the best music we had
ever heard and we marvelled at the performance. Besides, we were
elated to think that we had heard him and still retained our ten
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(1882)

E---194.
Camp Meeting Revival.

7 In the summer a camp meeting revival was held and everybody went as to a kind of social entertainment. It really was an entertaining performance. There were four visiting preachers from town and our neighbor, Parson Hall, was quite active. An arbor was constructed of uptight poles, cross poles, and brush piled on top. The ~~seats~~ benches were sawed puncheons with pegs for legs. Three meetings were held daily, forenoon, afternoon, and evening. The arbor was some thirty feet in diameter and was supplied with puncheon benches with a single aisle, an open space in front of the altar (a pine table) and a mourners bench. The audience within the arbor was mostly women in calico dresses and sunbonnets and a few of the older men. The unregenerate men and boys sat or stood around outside. There was a regular series of camp meeting songs that were sung in quavering, uncertain voices, following a leader who would first read off a line and start to sing it when the others would try to join in. There were such songs as "I want to be an angel, and with the angels stand," "Tell me the old, old story," "Still He is waiting," "Throw out the lifeling," "Onward Christian soldiers," "Almost persuaded," and dozens of others. The regular procedure was for the preacher to tell his audience that they were poor miserable sinners, that they were children of the devil and desperately wicked, that they were doomed to an eternity of torture by hell fire, and that the only way to salvation and the joys of eternal bliss was in repentance and professed belief in the bible and in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the Saviour of mankind. In the early stages of these meetings the preachers took particular delight in describing in great detail the horrors of hell.

Camp Meeting Journal
 1882

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especially for those sinners who hardened their hearts and did not join the church, who took part in dancing, fiddling, card playing, and other forms of frivolous and devilish amusements. One preacher described in detail how sinners, especially the young men and women, boys and girls, would be boiled naked in oil: another how they would writhe in agony over metal grates under which hot fires were perpetually burning and how the flames would fry and roast them like chickens in a frying pan: and a third specialized on the spectacle of devils pouring molten ^{blessed} metals over his victims: and the fathers and mothers of these desperately wicked young people were pictured as sitting on the golden walls of heaven and looking down into the pit of hell and watching the agonized sufferings of their offspring. Then by way of contrast the preachers would describe the state of divine bliss of those who accepted the plan of salvation, had their sins washed away by the Blood of the Lamb until they were whiter than snow and on dying were taken up in the arms of angels and tenderly transferred to the bosom of God, given the freedom of the Holy City with streets of gold and pearl and walls of jasper, given a crown of glory and a harp of gold, and the privilege of sitting on the walls of heaven and looking down into the depths of hell and there beholding their brothers and sisters, sons and daughters, fathers and mothers, sweethearts and other loved ones roasting on gridirons and spits, and enjoying the thrills and ecstasies of rejoicing with the All Mighty, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and the angels, in witnessing the raging and gnashing of teeth of Satan and his diabolical cohorts as they belched forth fire and smoke when

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just one human soul was snatched from the burning. *P* From time to time there were experience meetings in which some of the church members in good standing and new converts would get up and relate how ^{wicked,} desperately ~~sixfold~~ unhappy and utterly miserable they were when steeped in sin ^{before they saw the light,} ~~xxxxsawthelight~~, and how unutterably happy and holy they had been since they humbled their pride and accepted the plan of salvation and now they knew there was a throne of pearl and of diamonds, a crown of glory, and a harp of gold awaiting them in the Holy City. *P* The preachers would gradually work themselves up into a frenzy in picturing the horrors of hell and the glories of heaven until their eyes became fixed and staring as if they actually saw what they were describing, some of the sisters of the church would get hysterical and begin to shout, others would get hold of some of the younger people and lead them up to the mourners bench, there to be prayed over and begged by the preachers and brethren to forsake their sins, accept Jesus, and stand forth for God and righteousness, until some of the mourners would become hysterical also, shouts would go up that another soul was saved, more songs would be sung, and so the performance would continue until everyone was exhausted. *P* The ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ aim of the preachers seemed to be to throw as many as possible in hysterical paroxysms as an evidence of the beneficent power of the Holy Spirit. From long practice some of these preachers were pretty good psychologists and were experts in bringing about a hysterical state of mind. On one occasion I saw a boy of about fourteen yield reluctantly to the importunities of several women, including his mother and a sister, and reluctantly allow himself to be led to the mourners bench and kneel down before it. An old preacher pounced upon him. A young

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standing beside me said that the old preacher hated that boy. Perhaps that explained why the preacher hit the boy repeatedly and rapidly resounding blows on the back with his open hand and doubled fist saying, "God be praised young man, I have had my eyes on you, I have wrestled with the Lord for you," and so on, each phrase being emphasized with heavy blows on the young man's back. After one had been to the mourner's bench he was expected to profess religion and be given the right hand of fellowship. *PP* After conversions ceased to be made the revival would terminate with a baptising. This ceremony was performed in a waterhole in the creek. At the appointed time the people of the surrounding country would gather in the woods by the waterhole. The converts would retire to a secluded spot and change into old clothes. The preacher would wade out until the water came up to his waist. The converts would come down the soft muddy bank and join the preacher in the water. He would place his ^{arm} about the waist of the convert, repeat a formula, and duck the convert backwards under water. The baptised brother or sister usually came up sputtering and dripping and rather white in the face. The unregenerate young men and boys were especially interested in watching the girls undergo this ordeal, because they came out with their thin garments clinging tightly so that the rounded contours of their forms were visible, which was a rare sight for country boys. *PP* Usually the converts went through the rest of the summer wearing a holier-than-thou expression, but after the crops were gathered and colder weather came they would begin to attend "play parties." *PP* Play Parties. These were held in shacks and cabins and the young people would ride many miles to attend them. A play party amused itself

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with such games as "Puss in the corner," "Blind man's bluff," or pairing off and marching and countermarching to the tune of "Old Dan Tucker," or the piece beginning with "Oh, Sister Susie, how happy were we, The night we sat under the juniper tree, The juniper tree, I-o, ^{I-o,} The juniper tree, I-o." These innocent play parties would be held at intervals until the ^{religious} conscience of the young people wore off and the weather got cold and then ^{some} night, inevitably, they would all fall from grace ^{and} become backsliders from the church by ~~dancing~~ listening to the devil and dancing to the sound of a fiddle. ^{Dances.} Some of the bolder unregenerates would be responsible for this. When they thought the time was ripe they would chip in and hire a fiddler to come with them to the play party, it having been arranged with the head of the house beforehand that no objection to a dance would be raised. Usually they brought a supply of whiskey along and would get the other young men to join them in a libation. After a few drinks word would be passed around that a fiddler was present. A pine table would be pulled to one corner, a chair placed upon it, and the musician with his instrument would mount it. He would tune up and there would be a flutter of interest on the part of the young people, and with the first strains of a lively jig one of the moving spirits would stand to one side and begin to call out "Get your pardners," "Salute your pardners," "All promenade," "Partners to the right," "Partners to the left," "All sashay," and so on. There would be great hilarity, more drinking, and sometimes a fight, all to the great scandal of the countryside. ^PThe fact that dancing was considered sinful, because it contributed pleasure to the carnal mind, a sure way for the devil to start his

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victims on the downward road to hell, and was strictly forbidden by God and God's church on earth, probably contributed greatly to the pleasure of the participants. Usually country people joined the church at revival meetings in summer, danced and fell from grace in winter, with great regularity between the ages of 12 and 30, by which time they be^acame fathers and mothers and were sobered by the cares and responsibilities of parenthood.

Revivals.

7 I attended these revivals and baptisms and watched the proceedings with great interest, but was critical of the sermons, of the glaring and unreasonable inconsistencies of the plan of salvation, of the diabolical characteristics attributed to God the Father, and of the irreconcilable discrepancies between the professions of Preacher Hall, our near neighbor, and his daily life as we knew it. A harder, more brutal, unneighborly man I have never met. Other pillars of the church were little, if any, better. ~~What~~ ^{PP}What I most enjoyed was the singing, the simple sentimental hymns, sung by the quavering voices of plain country people, and the ride home at night under the twinkling stars, and the hum of innumerable insect voices, fanned by a soft night breeze, with the rustling of the prairie grasses and leaves of the serried ranks of corn in our field by the lane. In these rides home in such surroundings I would ponder over the statements in the Bible that I had read or heard expounded at the meetings and I could feel that there might be a spirit world with a living god and angels and the souls of good people somewhere beyond the stars, but the moment I thought of the revolting descriptions of hell that I had just heard, I would think of the whole scheme of salvation as a myth and utterly childish and ridiculous, because God and the

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devil and heaven and hell were all linked together, and the preachers had said you could not believe in one without believing in the other any more than you could think of a thing with one end without another end, or a top without a bottom, an upper without a lower, and so on.

Porch Sleeping.

7 All during this summer I slept on a folded quilt on the front porch. The floor was hard, but I soon got used to it and, tired out with hard work, I slept profoundly. I shall never forget waking from time to time and watching the silvery moon or stars in the sky, fancying I could trace forms on the moon or patterns in the sky, trying to think how far off they are and what forms of life might be on them, and seeing the white clouds move slowly or swiftly across the face of the moon, watching the pink glow and the shadows in the clouds, and listening to the rustling of the leaves of the one poplar tree near by, or the rustling of the leaves of the corn by the orchard, and the many insect voices, especially the crickets, locusts and catidids, and seeing the flickering lights of the fireflies. The air on the Texas prairies is pure and the stars at night seemed much larger, brighter and closer there than in northern climes. And then in the morning, to awaken at dawn and see the soft flush of pink ripples in the pearly gray of the east and slowly and majestically the appearance of the big, round, red, glowing sun as it rose above the eastern horizon, and to hear the roosters crow, the many bird voices, the ecstatic trills and melody of the mocking birds, and the distant drumming of the prairie ~~xxx~~ chickens. Such it was to be a boy on the Texas prairie, with a vivid imagination, many dreams, an appreciation of beauty in color, form, and life in all its manifestations, with youth, hope, wonder, and

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Doyle's Dream

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a fascinating life before him and each day a new day.

7 Looking to the Future.
It was this summer I began to dream of my future and what I would do when I reached the age of 21 and was free. Probably in answer to questions I had learned ~~that~~ of the common law provision that a boy must work for his parents and that all that he earns and he himself belongs to his parents until he is 21. To me it seemed like a lifetime almost to have to wait until I was 21 before I would be free to work for myself and go ~~and do~~ where and do what I pleased. I thought it highly unjust, because at the age of thirteen I had had four years experience in farm work and within the limits of my strength could do anything, and much more of some things than father or any other man. It seemed to me that even if my parents had fed and cared for me during infancy they were responsible for my being born, and that inasmuch as I had not been consulted about the matter it was not fair and just for me to be required by law to do a man's work for 12 out of 21 years of my period of inferior servitude. I felt that my four years of steady, efficient and unremunerated work had about compensated for the cost of my keep as a child and I began to think of running away, getting work on a farm in another county, saving my wages until I had enough to go to school and start a career. I considered seriously whether I should be a doctor, a lawyer, a preacher, a teacher, a writer, an artist, a singer, a mechanic, a farmer, a miner, a sailor, an explorer, or any one of a number of other callings. My preference rather lay in the direction of becoming a civil engineer, having in mind the combination of open air life, exploration, use of instruments of precision, office work, and high salary.

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(1882)

E--202

Dream Voyages

> Also I dreamed of travel and adventure. I had in mind pretty well the geography of the world, the shape of the continents and oceans and their relative positions, the principal rivers, lakes and mountains, and had a strong desire to see them. I rarely thought of working to save money with which to travel in the usual way or of working my way on railways and steamships, but rather of constructing a boat of my own. My favorite day dream was of making a flat-bottomed rowboat of plank, a pair of oars, a pole with a hook on the end of it to be used for pulling things in, with a long rope with which to ⁱtie to a tree or stump on the bank, with a piece of iron or a heavy stone to used as an anchor, the boat to have a frame work of hoops and canvas for protection against rain, a small sheet iron stove for cooking, a few blankets for bedding, a water bucket, frying pan, kettle, jug for water, knife, fork and spoon, a tin box in which to keep food, a fishing outfit, a shot gun, a rifle, a pistol, a bowie knife, an ax, a hatchet, a saw, a brace and bits, some steel ~~trap~~ traps, a small tent, and provision for locking all these things securely in the boat so that things could not be stolen in case I left the boat unguarded. I planned the construction of the boat and its equipment in the minutest detail. ~~TherexxxwaxthexxwaterxxxwasxxxupxxxinxxxSanderxxxCreekxxx~~
Also I intended to have a lantern, some text books, maps, a watch, compass, thermometer, and telescope and microscope. Then when the water was up in Sander's Creek I would steal away, get in the boat, float down stream about 20 miles to Red River and down the river for 50 or 100 miles, hunting and fishing en route. Here somewhere I would hire out for a month or two on a farm to get some ready money. And so on down Red River to the Mississippi.

505-1
James Watson

I expected to make the trip leisurely, with intervals of work on farms, and I counted especially on cotton picking to make a nice sum of money because I was an expert cotton picker and could make good wages and my expenses would be light because I would sleep in my boat and cook my own meals. At the mouth of the Red River I would hesitate as to whether I should go up or down the Mississippi, but always decided on going down to avoid the hard work and loss of time rowing up stream. ~~I~~ I would winter in New Orleans, either working or going to school, and thoroughly explore the city, especially the interesting French quarter about which I had read. At New Orleans I would either buy or construct a seagoing boat. I realized that I might have to stay and work in the city a year to earn enough money to buy a boat or the materials to make one. I preferred the idea of designing and constructing my own boat, because then I could make a little cabin to suit my own convenience and put in my own power. I thought of the boat as being about thirty feet long, with a cabin, and all the sails it could carry, supplemented by a small but highly efficient steam engine and propeller, for use when there was no wind and I had a supply of fuel; and in addition there was to be a contrivance geared to the propeller to be worked by hand and foot power when both wind and fuel were lacking. Also there was to be two pair of oars, one pair as a reserve, and the other to be used when all other forms of power failed. I was to have a small rowboat just large enough to carry myself and one other person, to make trips between the boat and the shore because, of course, the large boat would be anchored in midstream or off shore. The cabin was to be fitted up with all sorts of convenient devices, and in the

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hold was to be stored a supply of provisions and water, fishing tackle, guns and ammunition, and cheap jewelry for trading with the savage tribes I should encounter. *P* With the freedom of imagination I varied the shape and outward appearance of the boat in many respects. Sometimes, it was to be relatively short, broad, and substantial to guarantee seaworthiness, with prow and stern something like the Spanish caravels. At other times, it was to be long, low, and narrow, for speed. Sometimes the masts were to be upright so ~~xxxxx~~ the sails would catch all the wind, and at other times they slanted back in rakish, piratical fashion. The boat was to have lead in the keel and a deep adjustable centerboard to keep it from tipping over in the various gales I might encounter. It was to have airtight spaces along the outer rails above the water line to make it nonsinkable. It was to be equipped with a compass, sextant, charts, and an automatic steering device, and I expected to study navigation and learn how to make observations. It was to be fitted up as a sort *Q* of floating home and there was to be a collection of textbooks, histories and fiction to improve my mind, and one or ^{two} musical instruments for diversion. I proposed to learn how to sketch and to take a camera along so that I would have pictures of the strange lands, places, animals, birds, and all the natural and artificial wonders I should see. I expected also to study botany, entomology, and zoology, so that I would become a trained naturalist. *P* The name of the boat required much thought. Usually my thoughts ran to three sets of names, Greek goddesses, water fowl, or adjectives, such as "Rover," "Fearless," "Dauntless," the State of my birth "Illinois," or of my adoption "Texas," or "Lone Star." The ques-

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tion of color also was important. I never quite decided whether it should be white, blue, red, gray, or black, or what the trimming should be. Then there was the question of the flag it should fly. Of course I would fly the American flag for identification in foreign ports, but it seemed desirable also to fly the State flag to excite curiosity, and my own private colors as owner, commanding officer, and crew, the designing of which required careful consideration. *¶* Having constructed and equipped the boat to my satisfaction and settled these other important questions, I realized that it would be necessary to learn how to manage a boat with sails, especially on the mountainous waves of the high seas. The best solution of this difficulty seemed to be to hire out for a few weeks or months to some fishermen for board and instruction; then to make a few short experimental trips with my own boat in the quiet waters at the mouth of the Mississippi until I became familiar with its management and navigation. All this might take another six months, but the time would be my own and I could learn something new each day.

Then, having the boat well stocked with water, provisions, tackle and ammunition, the great day would come when I would get up steam, run up the flag, hoist the sails, weigh the anchor, and actually start on my long voyage to strange lands. My plan was to pass out of the Mississippi into the Gulf of Mexico and follow the coast of the mainland, venturing up such rivers as were navigable, climbing nearby mountains and exploring jungles and forests, fishing, hunting, and collecting. Usually I would picture the daily life on the boat in minute detail for the first week, and then skip a year or two or several years, until I

had rounded Cape Horn, sailed up the coast, and entered the harbor of San Francisco. Usually this much of the dream would occupy a whole day of plowing or hoeing in the fields. Other days with the boat I would explore the South Sea Islands, the Alaskan coast, and then down to Japan, China, the Philippines, Borneo, Australia, the countries around the Indian Ocean, Africa, the Mediterranean, and lastly Europe. I expected to be an old but a well educated man when I returned, because it would take many years, I would be studying and seeing things all the while, and would visit all the libraries, museums and art galleries of the world. My closing years would be spent in writing and lecturing.

Another ~~xxxx~~ favorite dream was that of leaving home surreptitiously and without saying good by/ on Daisy next year. Daisy was Gypsy's colt that father gave me. She was running loose on the prairie, was quite small but shapely, and in another twelve months would be three years old and could be ridden. Equipped with a horse of my own I would ride westward, stopping to work on farms or ranches en route, to get ready money, and keep on until I came to the Rockies, which I would penetrate until I found a nice little valley, with a clear running brook flowing through it, a meadow, trees on the slopes, and snow clad peaks above. Here with rifle and fishing tackle I could live and with my ax/ I could build a log cabin, and a shed for Daisy, cultivate a small garden, store up food and supplies in a dugout cellar, cut and cure enough hay from the meadow to feed the pony through the winter, and live like a king all by myself.

A Visitor

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In the late summer Robbie Garner spent a week with us. I was surprised, and just a little patronizing, at his ignorance of country life. One afternoon before dusk Carlo chased a rabbit.

In its fright and confusion the rabbit came directly toward us and when a few feet from Eddie ~~leaped~~ high in the air and struck him below the belt, fell in a heap, scrambled to its feet, and made its escape under the lane fence. Eddie was very much astonished.

Ginger Ale.

7 About this time Tigertown, so named from its bad reputation, voted local option. It was a small village some three miles from our place with about four houses and two general stores, both of which sold whiskey. Immediately after local option went into effect these two stores stocked up with ginger ale, which was a pink liquid with a high alcoholic content and a liberal dose of ginger, mustard, or red pepper. It tasted hot, ~~was~~ felt hot all the way down, and was very potent. Drunkenness, fights, and scandalous conduct between the sexes increased rather than decreased during this moral spasm of the community and at the next election the Tigertown precinct abolished its dry law by an overwhelming majority.

Sorghum.

7 In the late summer I helped a neighbor grind a small crop of sorghum. The sorghum was crushed between three small, upright iron rollers which were made to revolve by means of a lever to which a team was hitched at the outer end. I furnished one of our horses, old George, and worked from sun to sun for 25 cents a day, so that at the end of three days I had accumulated 75 cents. The horses went about in a circle and I followed behind to keep them going. Occasionally one of them would lag behind. Once when this happened my employer struck the slack horse a sharp blow that caused him to jump suddenly and break the fastening between the singletree and the doubletree, so that

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fastening between the slack horse and the doubletree, so that

the free end of the doubletree flew back and caught me on the chin, cutting it open and knocking me down. I was stunned for a moment but soon recovered, tied my ragged handkerchief about my chin to stop the flow of blood and went on with my work.

Crop Failure.

7 This was the third consecutive year of crop failure on account of drouth and had it not been for what father earned in the shop we would have been in difficulties for something to eat during the winter months. As it was, he borrowed some money from a relative in Illinois with which to buy imported corn to feed the horses and seed for planting the following spring.

Bombardment of Alexandria.

7 We had very little news from the outside world except an occasional county paper that father brought with him from town on his visits home. I recall that this year I was much impressed by a statement that the British were bombarding Alexandria, Egypt. I tried to picture in imagination the scene presented by the great war ships drawn up in battle array before the ~~great~~ defenceless city and belching forth smoke and flame from the mounthes of roaring cannon, and the terrible destruction that must follow from great cannon balls plowing through buildings full of people and children, and what I would do if I were in the city when this happened. I little thought that late in life I should walk the streets of Alexandria and recall having read about its bombardment as a boy on a ~~farm~~ remote prairie farm in Texas.

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